

# KORRUPT YR SELF #5

- Exotic Fever Records' 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Elliott Harvey of *A Stick and A Stone*
- Photographer Rachel Atcherson
- Reviews, Ramblings & More!



Cover Art by Alexander L. Muñoz

## **KORRUPT YR SELF #5 - WINTER 2010**

All Cool Art by Alex Munoz

All the other stuff by some jerk named Erik Gamlem

for more rants, reviews, writings and photos  
please visit KYS at: [korruptyrself.wordpress.com](http://korruptyrself.wordpress.com)  
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## Fools Gold

What happened to all those kids Jem Cohen taped for Fugazi's *Instrument?* Did they grow up and get shitty, corporate jobs like me? Are they doing anything useful with their lives? Or did they straighten up, cut their hair, untie the flannel shirts from their waists, tossing them to the back of the closet and other wise cut out the bullshit? Probably not. More than likely they got inspired, moved to Hollywood and worked as an executive producer on *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist*. Like anyone fucking cares.

We are a decade past the 90's now. It's time to deconstruct that shit with the venom Mike Watt gave the 70's on *Ballhog or Tugboat?* Completed, ironically, in the 90's, *Ballhog or Tugboat?* was an album filled with rock superstars who were suppose to save us. Those long haired, angsty, men who allegedly learned better from their hippie turned yuppie parents. And where are they now? Oh yea, they signed an exclusive distribution deal with Target to sell their new album to the same old fans, all thirtysomething and living in the suburbs. I wonder if Sony's got some kind of early retirement plan. I wonder if Target gave out free gift cards at the *Backspacer* listening party. I wonder if Eddie Vedder buys his toothpaste from the red circle and dot.

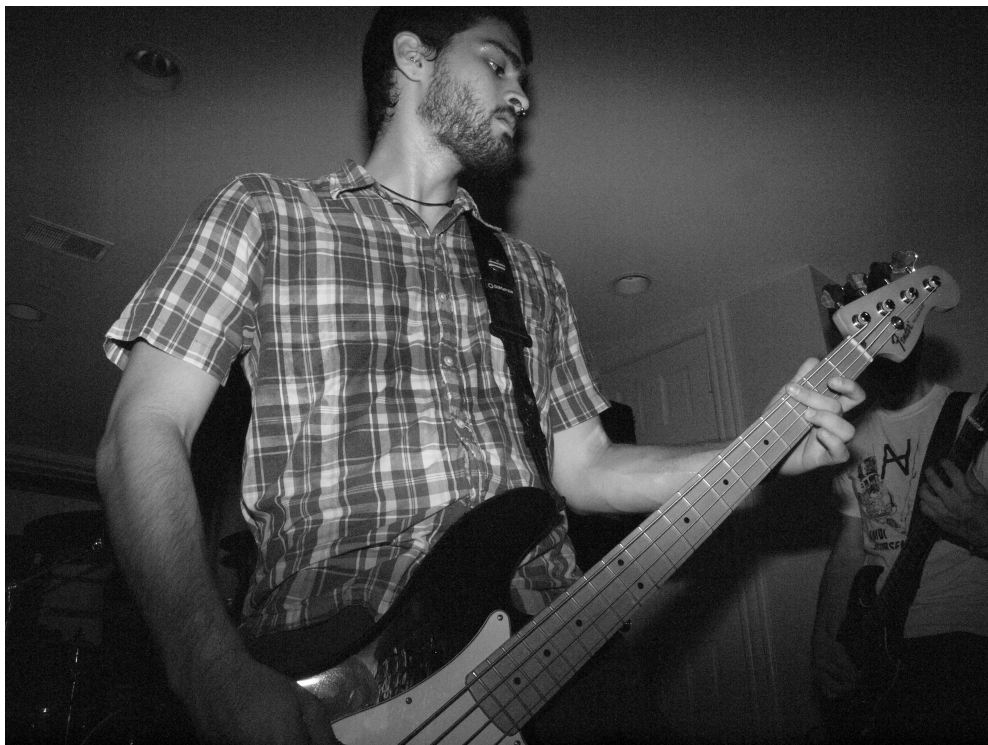
But no this isn't about selling out or growing old or even nostalgia. It's about how ideas are supposed to be bulletproof, but so often those ideas are made of rubber. Maybe they aren't penetrating, but they sure are manipulated. They sure seem to bend at will. And that's probably all just part of being human. Idealism is a lofty bit of radical thought. The militant-vegan anarchist who was down at the Battle of Seattle, yea I know some who are still walking the righteous path, in opposition to establishment. But how many became bankers and accountants? How many went to law school, all with the best intentions of being a public defender, until the bills for those student loans started rolling in?

Ten years out of the 90's and it all looks like vacant idealism. The world hasn't changed. Yea, we got a black president now. How fucking progressive of us. He's still a noble peace prize winning motherfucker sending troops and civilians to a country to fight for some other kind of idealism. And fuck me, I am not trying to be cynical here. I truly am just wondering what the fuck keeps happening to the people in this country. We are, for the time being, one of the most free countries in the world.

We have the opportunity to create, consider and advance ideas. We also have the economic power available to harness and make this Universe forsaken planet into something worth maintaining. And yet, decade after decade, we prop up someone, be it a politician, musician or some other hapless soul to act the role of spokesperson, rally around the rhetoric and then go home.

Oh but who the fuck am I kidding? I am sitting in my suburban home once more, ranting like a buffoon on a computer, afforded to me as a luxury for the labor I exchange to a corporation. Fuck me. Fuck me up the stupid ass. I shop at Target too. I hope Jeff Ammet has a profit sharing plan, so every time I buy toilet paper or the new CD featuring Jack White, he and Stone Gossard get a cut.

I should just shut the fuck up and go play Rock Band. All the songs that spoke to my teenage angst are available for me to mime on a plastic guitar with colorful buttons. I hope that shit is recyclable.



## Plastic

It's a weeknight and I am at the 9:30 club in Washington D.C. Earlier, I had driven out to the show, Ted Leo and the Pharmacists. I didn't have a ticket purchased prior to leaving the house. These days I just wing it. I can't commit to anything ahead of the event these days. The show is fucking sold out at the door. But I have mad skills and talk my way into a ticket. (That's a lie. The truth is I've been blessed to have met an awesome friend who works there who let me buy a ticket for a sold out show. This is evidence that luck has come my way. No seriously. I'm totally touched.)

I'm walking down the hallway, in the back, towards the bathrooms. They have those cutesy Barbie doll's dressed as royalty on the doors. Gwar has played here, the Jesus Lizard, even Slayer. The guy at the door has giant holes in his ears and shit in his face (he's a nice guy, really, but I am trying to paint a picture here) and they have cutesy shit on the walls? Nightclubs are a strange and intriguing place. I'm on the phone, and I'm trying to find a quiet place to have my conversation. I note that Lungfish is playing over the P.A. as I come upon a table. Suddenly, some woman with a clip board is talking at me. I am clearly on the phone, talking loudly to try to compensate for the awesome power of Baltimore's greatest band. Somehow, all of this, the chords and growling, the high pitched voice of a man over talking on the phone, the dimmed purple lights, and still I'm being asked to support something with a signature.

I sign the paper. She hands me a button. It says "Earth Day" on it. A button, made of metal and plastic, that says "Earth Day" on it. And it goes directly into my pocket.

The Earth deserves it's own day. It deserves our care and insight everyday quite frankly. And while I have no problem throwing down my signature in an effort to get some fat ass to sign some other paper that will hold other people mildly accountable for the crap that they do. But a button, shoved in a non-attentive hand is not Earth friendly. It's quite the opposite.

Our actions matter. We do have to pay more attention to what we do on this planet. Our ideas can not be contradicted by our actions, and buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, magnets, mailers, god help me,

mailers, are not attentive to this planet. This isn't an argument about percents and numbers or any of this shit. The simple fact is, as a culture, as a community, as a country especially, we are some short sighted, non thinking idiots. We generate waste; needless, unconsidered, past over waste. We produce so many things that are just thrown away without impact, regardless of their good or non intentions.



When I started to create a paper zine, I chose this format very, very carefully. Zines are not the most penetrating method of reaching people with ideas. Most of the copies of this zine are distributed in non-traditional ways, left on bus seats or in super markets or at the doors of nightclubs and the last vestiges of independent record stores, all done so with the hope that someone is intrigued enough to pick it up, read it and either save it or pass it on. But there is a good chance that it will end up in the trash. And that weighs on my mind as I pull every stolen page off the printer.

The button ends up in a box in my house because I am moving. I have just finished going through all my stuff, putting what I want to keep in boxes, what is useable but unwanted into other boxes and that which no longer is sustainable in whatever appropriate receptacle I can find. The button, it goes into a box. I don't know which box it is and when I unpack the box, sometime in the future, I will place this unwanted token in a drawer. Where it goes from there is anyone's guess. We express our beliefs through actions, not the simple slogans and flare we use to decorate the void.

## Birthday Party



July 3, 2010 and Exotic Fever officially, if not technically turns 10 years old. My friend Katy Otto, who seems to figure prominently in the issues of these zines, is hosting two days of celebratory awesomeness in her new home town of Philadelphia. I have only been to Philadelphia for

music related events. I've seen Discount there three times, hoofed it up that way to see the Beastie Boys (more than ten years ago), went up to see Hot Water Music and left before they played (don't ask why) and a plethora of other shows. My relationship to the city of supposed brotherly love (and I really wish that was a euphemism for gay culture, but so far as I can tell that was not the original intent) is based totally on the nature of ROCK. So going up to celebrate 10 years of something very important to me, revolving around music was no surprise.

I had a companion with me. The social networking description of this relationship would be "It's Complicated". Two words that hardly describe any interpersonal relationship between two people. She too creeps into this zine with a haunting regularity. And those negative adjectives are not a description for her, but for the interworking of my own mind. This whole free association writing shit has to stop at some point, right? Not after coffee and a bag of organic Jelly Beans. Yea, this free form brain puke is getting me off topic. The point is, I got to spend a weekend with some good people, despite the distance and obvious missteps I've taken in my life.

We leave in the early afternoon of July 2<sup>nd</sup> and make our way North up familiar if not increasingly boring 95. The allure of this road fails to hold the magic and romanticism that it did when I was in my twenties and trips like this happened with more frequency. Now it is mostly just an obstacle that gets harder and harder not to succumb to. By the time I get to boring Delaware I want to pull the car over on Elkton Road, head up

to Newark, settle down and piss off the residence by pronouncing it wrong. And for the record, I don't give a shit what the difference between Newerk and NewARK are or which one applies to which fucking city. New Jersey gets one point for Lifetime and Bruce Springsteen but minus five for letting shitheads take over Hoboken and another minus one million for Guido's. So fuck you New Jersey, yr the same as Delaware, only more trashy and fucked up but with better bands.

Hunger overcomes us and we decide to hit up Liquid Earth in Fells Point. This vegan/raw food bar and eatery is pricey, but cozy, good, but not quite filling and



doesn't have French Fries, which is a shame because I was really looking to eating some Old Bay while in Charm City. The organic raspberry tea however is worthy the risk of catching scabies or meeting your demise at the hands of the Barksdale's. Baltimore is a city I never tire of, though the idea of anyone living there terrifies me. I've never been inside a building that felt structurally safe and everyone looks like they currently are or have been on Heroin, with the exception of Bepstein who looks healthy as ever. Everyone is friendly in Baltimore and a lot of cool shit is there. If you are looking for a vacation destination I highly recommend it. It is quirky, unique, inexpensive and so long as yr not looking to get fucked up (which is still easy enough to do) you'll be fine. I recently heard that John Waters gives tours of the city to cast members of his films, further enhancing my desire to one day be in one of his movies. Also, Lungfish is from Baltimore and they are the greatest band in the universe. So make arrangements to get there ASAP. You will not be disappointed.

Back on 95, we head north. Traffic is okay, but I feel like we are moving at a snails pace. I am impatient, we listen to Flight of the Concorde, my

companion believing for five minutes that New Zealand is the place on this planet where she would fit in the most, and me declining to disagree with that sentiment. We make it to Pennsylvania and shortly thereafter to Philadelphia International Airport. I insist on going to FDR Skate Park for a photo session that proves unfruitful. Upon our arrival there are a number of cars and bodies, but few are moving about the park and even fewer are actually shredding up this East Coast Mecca of four wheel ripping. This is interrupted even further by the spill and resulting head injury of a local bike rider. A man, about my age, not wearing a helmet because he's cool as fuck takes a nasty crack about the brain case and gets really fucked up. My lady friend, a nurse who works in the head trauma ward of a local hospital calls 911 and we managed to walk this dude to his truck. He has no fucking clue where he is or anything. It's a pretty bad smack to the head, the little rippers unsure of what to do and this guy wanting to just chill out. But he can barely stand.

This incident shakes up my lady friend quite a bit and she laments at these boys and their stupidity about not wearing helmets, not understanding head trauma and being irresponsible to the point where if they are going to be idiots that at least they should read the internet so they know what to do if one of their other idiot friends does this shit. It's funny and sad how difficult to tell women just how stupid boys are. You try and try your whole life to explain the complete mental retardation of the average man to women and they just don't get it. We are, all of us, dumb by nature. It's that simple. And still, they don't get it. They will say they do, especially when they get burned in relationships, but sex education classes would have actually done well with a documentary about this incident. I think the condoms part would sink in a lot more if young girls saw that shit never changes for boys after age 15.

We go get cheese steaks. Now, I am a vegetarian, struggling with veganism. So no, I did not eat an actual cheese steak. We find a place on South Street that serves vegetarian cheese steaks called Steve's. It's fucking good even though it's not Vegan. It's so good that I have a second one a few nights later along with my lady friend who is not only a struggling vegan but a struggling raw foodist. But you know what, like music, you have to over indulge in food. Yes, I want to be vegan and I work on being vegan, but having a cheese steak in Philly was a must thing to do in my life. Along with "skating" at FDR park (I pulled out my



board, failed at an ollie, did a manual and then left) I marked two things off the list in one day. It was awesome.

Katy lives in Fishtown, a redeveloping neighborhood in what I assume is North Philadelphia. The streets are fucked up, it's really dirty and there are new condos popping up next to old industrial buildings and empty lots over run by tall, yellow grass. Katy's apartment is next to a place that makes pretzels for street vendors and across the street is a giant eight sided die and a graffiti covered tank both of which are unmarked with any indication as to why they are there and how they came to be. I decide not to ask anyone, the imaginary mystery in my head too awesome to solve. The apartment is already filled with people, some I know and some new. Resin Hits has taken up temporary residency along with Katy's band mate Diane. We hang out, eat snacks and more people show up for the show at Katy's place.

I am going to drop a lot of names here. Names that are not made of the famous or important movers and shakers, but people I have known, whose music I love and I was glad to see. If you don't care about that, I don't really care. You don't have to keep reading this. There is probably more than enough stuff in this publication to keep you occupied. Aimee Argote emerges from the stair case and into the open room, guitar in tow. Central to this whole trip is seeing her play music. I would kill and eat a Democrat to see Aimee play music. Despite having her car broken into moments before, prior to a car trip to North Carolina, necessitated by the fact that she was recently "fired" from her job for unexplained reasons, Aimee delivered. Her sets are like a visit from a friend whose a little bit crazy, a little bit sleep deprived and a lot depressed but still fun to talk to and you get good conversations. The sun was setting and the pictures I took that highlighted my dear friend Aimee came out amazing.

Resin Hits live in Riverside, California and are really from out of this world. The combined shyness and awkwardness between myself and Mark and Daniel was unfortunate, because I didn't really talk to them much, but I instantly liked them and Daniel wore a DRI shirt for three days straight and I thought that was awesome. At the apartment they played a quiet set, Daniel singing and strumming a guitar and Mark utterly destroying the room through a mini Orange combo amp. That guy can fucking shred and their songs were amazing and crazy. What came the



following day, which we will get to, made me shudder to think what this band could do with a little bit more recognition.

Elliot Harvey sat on the couch with me and my lady friend and started to talk to us. I know, that doesn't seem unusual to you, but I live in



Washington DC, the most unfriendly, pretentious and guarded place on the planet. I don't really know how to handle it when people sit next to me and start talking. But I am really glad that Elliot Harvey pushed through and talked to us. It was the moment that made me realize I was not at home anymore and for the next 24 hours I actually felt relaxed. Then Elliot played music and it ruined my existence.

Under the moniker A Stick and A Stone, Elliot delivers a hauntingly beautiful

set of songs that seem as though they are from a fantasy world.

Remember that part in the Lord of the Rings trilogy where they are about to go off to battle and Eowyn sings that song and it's sad and mournful and beautiful? Yea dude, that's what Elliot sounds like. It's magical type shit. The last song he played pretty much did me in for the evening because it was at once beautiful and sad and left me wanting a better world.

Party land kicked in after Elliot played. I got to catch up with Johanna Claasen who I hadn't seen in years and just meet a bunch of new and exciting people. As the party people scattered out, the Resin Hits dudes settled in to the kitchen, put together a bowl and we all smoked up a little bit. I fell asleep while the bro's watched "The Illusionist" staring Edward Norton on TV. That movie is pretty awesome by the way.

The next day, following breakfast and a wardrobe delay, my lady friend and I head back to South Street for a visit to Magic Gardens. Magic Gardens is the life long work of Isaiah Zagar. He bought a house on South Street back when South Street was totally fucked and turned it into this mosaic piece of broken glass, found metal, ceramics that he paints and all kinds of other stuff. It's folk art in the most unlikely place

and the dude is really into dicks and naked people. Frankly, the place disturbed the shit out of me. I felt like I could get cut at any time by a sharp, protruding edge and did I mention there were a lot of dicks and naked people all over the place. And these were really violent dicks too. It was alarming as all hell. We bolted out of there and hit South Street where I did some shopping. This is what I purchased:

1. Cometbus #51 and *Vultures* by Denver's Bankrobber at The Wooden Shoe Anarchist Book Shop.
2. The *Demo* trade paperback collection written by Brian Wood and Illustrated by Becky Cloonan at Atomic City Comics
3. *The Shape of Punk to Come* vinyl Reissue by Refused at Repo Records.

Pretty good score if I do say so myself. We ate at Tattooed Moms where I had a vegan sandwich that was pretty tasty and then headed back to Katy's for the show at Kung Fu Necktie.

If I've learned anything about Katy Otto it's that she has really great taste in unheard music. I've known Katy since the label's inception, worked on it for a few years as the "web master" and have played with, hung out with or seen almost every band on her label. This is evidenced by the treat I am bestowed in the visage of Thank God's new album *Ice/Age* which is a noise/grind masterpiece of aural destruction. This is paranoia music. Did I mention Katy also has a great love for acoustic music? She touches so many ends of the spectrum of music, it's hard to imagine all of this is curated by one lady. But it is and it is beautiful.

So the nights epic line up was as follows:

A Stick and A Stone playing electric and doing a damn fine job at once again blowing my mind.

Richmond, VA's one man band Gull that totally floored the entire room, including a bunch of people who I think came just to see Elliot play music.

Katy Otto's new band with other DC expatriates, Johanna Claasen, Willie H. of Birds and Wires and the infamous Mary Chen. They are known as A Lonely American and reminded me of a DC Post Punk version of Bikini Kill.

DC's own Kathy Cashel drove up to join the party, playing her amazing songs and delivering another heart warming set that made me feel right at home.

The rock destruction version of Resin Hits that was masterful and face hitting all at once. Finesse + Violent Rock Power = AMAZING.

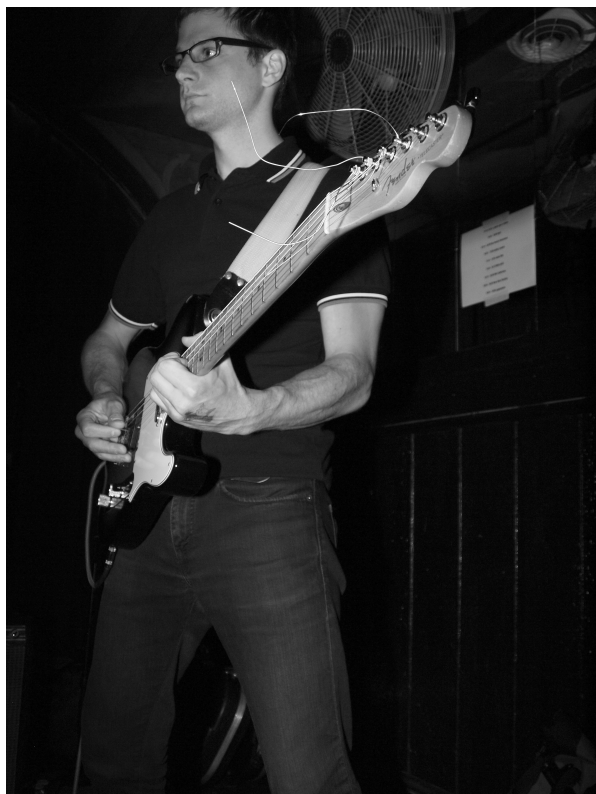
Local rockers Little Gold performed a sick set of country twinged Americana to great reception and applause.

Victory At Sea's M.G. Lederman has returned with a heavy dose of lonely bedroom rock.



Closing out the evening was Sterling, VA's own Pygmy Lush. This is the most underrated band on the planet right now. Instead of delivering an emotional and unrelenting set of their own brand of acoustic jams in a club for the ten remaining patrons, Pygmy Lush should be destroying

hushed  
crowds of  
thousands.  
If I could go  
on and on  
and on here  
in this  
space  
(which I  
could) I  
would  
delicately  
transfer the  
powers of  
their  
amazing  
songs and  
beauty to  
you. They  
are getting  
more real  
estate here  
because



they are one of the greats in music history. The product of friendship for over thirty years, Pygmy Lush give the world beauty in sadness. They deliver on a level akin to Joy Division and The Clash both in emotional response and true unique output. They are originators of a sound that belongs solely to them. You can't fuck with Pygmy Lush.

My lady friend and I walk through the empty streets of Fishtown. It's scary amongst the abandon buildings, crumbling facades of old houses and the cold stares of new yuppie condos. It feels lonely and unsafe and yet calm and peaceful all at the same time. My anxiety kicks back in, a disgusting feeling I have kept alive by the overconsumption of coffee since my first sip. I tremble now as I recount the rest of this story here on the page. But what the fuck, it was a beautiful moment in a most

unlikely beautiful place, a landscape that will stay with me for a very long time.

South Street at night is a clusterfuck of cruising. There aren't a lot of bars in that neighborhood and there isn't much to do unless TLA is having a show, but it's fucking filled with people and is totally nerve inducing if yr trying to score one more Veggie cheese steak before you leave Philly the next morning. We do happen to score one last one at Steve's once again, but the panic attack has already started, my heart thumping hard against my chest.



We return for the last time to Katy's apartment which is filled to the brim with more people. Pygmy Lush is in tow and half of them, along with most of the dudes from Little Gold are on the couch fucking around on Chat Roulette. The lady and I drag our sleeping gear outside onto the porch. Fireworks are being lit off all over the neighborhood and a few of the guys are out back just chilling while a guitar gets passed around. The air is cool but clean, the sky lights up and Johnny Ward and Chris Taylor trade off songs and noodling. I fall asleep to Johnny strumming and singing a song, a moment in my life akin to finding the release, finding the nirvana, the nothingness and peace we all crave. My

thudding heart beating against my chest can't even win, can't even keep me awake. A beautiful voice lulls me to slumber. I could have stayed asleep forever then.

Birds burst up from the trees and the shaking branches wakes me up. The first things my eyes find is a clear blue sky. It has been so long since I have awoken under such a beautiful sky. Though my body is sore from sleeping on a wooden deck I have never felt so young as I did in that moment. Soon the reality of the world comes rushing in, my anxiety takes over and I want to be home again. But I let my lady friend sleep peacefully, reminded of the beauty of others, the beauty of her and everything I love about her and all that makes our status the dreaded "It's Complicated" that hovers over every word we speak and seek to and from each other.



The drive home happens so quickly, so abruptly and without incident I actually forget that we were ever in Delaware. While the physical me is glad to be home in my familiar, guarded surroundings, the metaphysical and spiritual me longs to be back amongst the musicians

and friends that I love and have just met. Suddenly, Philadelphia and everything that happened in the last 50 hours seems too foreign to me. I am tired and yet restless and have felt sick ever since I woke up on Independence Day. Work looms in the degrading hours today and I

want to pull my stomach from my belly again and mute my unrelenting heart that beats with a sick emotion and stress. Life is different, there are so many things left unsaid and unaccounted for. The buzzing of guitars acts as counter noise to the howling that is disrupting my being. I am frustrated and just want to explode and explore the vastness of space. This body keeps me locked to the ground, imprisoned in a world that makes less sense to me. I miss the singing voices that penetrated my head, the carefree strolling about a new town with a person I love very much, the moments where shyness is overcome by the joy of meeting new people. I miss that small moment of calm, the one where maybe life isn't so hectic and chaotic, where maybe I can cope with it. That moment is gone for now. Maybe one day I can find it again. That is what I wish for, that is what I wait for.





## The First Time

I remember it like it was yesterday. 18 years old and not a moment too soon. The pulling and shaking, the rough burn of the carpet on my back, the eagerness for it to be over and yet the want to understand the experience in the fullest way possible. I wish this was all a weird recollection of some kinky sexploration I had at that ripe old age, but unlike my first time fucking, my first anxiety attack left a much greater and lasting impression. Not to say that I don't remember the first time some poor, young girl let me nervously plow into her with trepidation, but the first time I found myself shaking on the floor of my parents house, paralyzed to do anything else is a feeling I can't shake.

From that day on, I have had a shit ton of these episodes. I remember distinctly one that kicked off in a midtown movie theater. I was dating this girl and things weren't going great. The writing was on the wall that our romance was quickly coming to an end. I just sort of freaked out and didn't know why. Actually, to this day I still don't know why I had a panic attack while watching *Quill* (a fantastic movie, Jeffrey Rush is so underrated) in a warm and cozy theater on February afternoon. The ending of said relationship didn't have much of an emotional impact on me. I was more bummed out about my trips to New York no longer including a free place to stay and a young lady to have good sex with waiting for me. It was a fun relationship with a smart, beautiful and intelligent woman I had nothing in common with and was not destined to last long in this world. But I freaked out in that theater and needed to get somewhere familiar. To this day I can't explain it.

In 2008, as the year gave way to it's final days and looked for eternal slumber I had some really bad problems with anxiety. I was working on a novel, one that remains unfinished and a total mess to this day, over an extended vacation I took specifically to lock myself in my room and work on it. On Christmas day, at my parents house I totally started losing it. My heart slammed against my chest and I felt totally light headed. Somehow I maintained my shit and got through the day. I went to the emergency room that night pretty much believing that I had staved off a heart attack for nine hours.

Shit like this happened with more frequency. I've had another instance like this where I started feeling the same way driving home on 495 in Maryland. I pulled up straight to the hospital. That day, the tech took my



blood pressure and the stress of the arm band was so great that I popped it in the ER. No one could figure out what was wrong with me, but I thought I was going to die. I had this tight pain in my chest. My body just felt totally fucked up. It was crazy. Literally crazy. I was sent home with no diagnosis even though I thought I was checking out my mortal coil.

Despite these episodes though, I don't take medication for this. Part of the problem I have with my depression and stress induced anxiety is the guilt at the first world bullshit that seems to induce it. I feel fucking idiotic for being stressed out about the shit that stresses me out because it's so unimportant to me. The older I get the easier it is to recognize what the fuck is freaking me out. This kind of helps in getting past it, but most of the time I just lose time, forget where I am, can't concentrate and want to just go home and go to bed. As I write this, right this moment I am in the mist of a stress bender that started some time Saturday night. It's fucking Tuesday. I know that it's work that is stressing me out and I don't feel like dealing with it, but it's kind of hard not to go to my job, even if I know I am quitting in the next ninety days if everything goes right with my house.

And maybe that's why I am so freaked out. I need things with my house to go right so I can get out of that hell fucking mess. Going to such a stupid, incomparably unorganized place for another day makes me want scream until my throat bleeds and I choke to death on the blood and bile I upend. I fucking HATE that FUCKING job. That book, you know the one you read about a few paragraphs before, it's a book about how FUCKED UP office life is. The reason I can't finish it and the reason I freaked out that winter was because I was just too close to the material. And it's not like my job is hard, like lives depend on it or I am anywhere near getting fired, I just fucking hate the place and the people and everything about it to such a deep and penetrating degree that it totally disrupts my constitution. ARGHHHHHHHH.

Writing about all this doesn't really help me and it's not why I set out to put this tale down. Retelling the incidents of my fucked up life where I stress about all the little things to the point where I can't focus on the big picture is not a means of therapy for me. It's just something I want to say, in hopes that someone reads this and realizes they aren't the only fucked up privileged person in this brain damaged society. I have so much more than so many people on this planet and I try not to forget

that everyday, especially when I feel like this. But I fight ever day just to get out of bed, just to put on my clothes and walk out the front door. I don't know why this is and I think it's the first world guilt that actually keeps me going. I think a lot about this line from a Ghost Mice song that goes "don't sit on your ass and say that you're too sad or your too crazy, don't waste what you've got, no there's nothing worse then being lazy". While I find motivation in that song, it also pisses me off because sometimes I just am too sad or too crazy to even move. The act of motion is impossible, even though I know I've got so much going for me. But the art of self preservation is a skill I have not mastered yet and I wonder if I ever will.

It's been 15 years since my first panic attack, a reaction that came from nowhere. If I had any idea about what that day meant for me and my future I am not sure I would have bothered pulling myself up off the floor. It's hard to look back at a decade and a half of inconsolable worry and clear the way for all the good things because so many times those good moments were such a struggle to get to and under the surface was a twitching, fucked up heart that felt it could burst from your chest, stopping mid beat as it hits the dirty and grey pavement.



# Elliot Harvey of A Stick and A Stone

While in Philadelphia to celebrate the 10 year Anniversary of Exotic Fever, I was, once again, introduced to an unreal talent by my dear friend Katy Otto. I should say though, Elliot Harvey introduced himself to me and a friend as we sat on the couch between bands on the first night of celebration. This was a bit strange for me because I am very very very shy. Talking to strangers is not something I do with ease, but Elliot pushed on and I am glad he did. His music is magical, mystical and out of this world. Driving home I just felt compelled to find out more about his music and where it comes from.

**KYS:** What is your background in musical training or lessons and how do you apply that to your song writing?

**Elliot Harvey:** Songwriting is mostly an intuitive experience for me. As a child I always wanted music lessons, but I was always told that they were too expensive. We had a toy keyboard in the house though, and I'd spend hours and hours tinkering with it, making stuff up. With lessons I would have been taught to mimic other people's songs, but without them I learned to be more inventive instead.



**KYS:** I've gotta say, I'm shocked by that answer. So much independently made music seems to be made by people through instinct but they never look to "learn" what it is they are doing. While is often mind blowing, even at it's best can sound unlearned and lack grace and skill. Watching you play and listening to your songs and to the way you sing I assumed you had some classical training, though not of any genre or style that I can pinpoint now that I think about it. When we met, you told me you recently got a job teaching choir to kids. I wonder then how you apply this intuition to teaching them.

How do you work that into a structure, one I understand you deliver in a short amount of time each day?

**Elliot Harvey:** I teach them to learn songs by ear. We do a lot of call & response and repetition. I show them how to warm up their voices with fun exercises. We play singing games and learn songs in a lot of different languages. My main goal is for them to experience the fun of singing, and to wake up their voices after being shushed at all day. Once they love to sing, they're more open to learning the techniques of it.

**KYS:** In terms of the songs and instruments you utilize, I couldn't help but notice you played several different one's at the Heathen Salon show. Do you compose the songs on those instruments and stick with them, or do you switch things around as the song

formulates? Do they ever come from a preconceived idea where you've mapped out the sounds first before actually writing?

**Elliot Harvey:** Different sounds convey different emotions, so I try to choose the right instrument for a song depending on what sentiment it's expressing. I usually write songs when I'm on the move, either walking, biking, or riding trains, so I won't have an instrument in hand to compose with. It's pretty inconvenient, but that's just when songs choose to strike me, I guess. Usually I'll have an instrument or two in mind, and then when I can access them I'll figure the parts out. Lately I've been writing a lot of songs for bass guitar and bass drum, I don't know why. Sometimes I'll switch it up and use a different instrument for a song that usually uses another.



**KYS:** The percussion tracks on your album, "Opal Nightly" are pretty striking. I really like how they are used. They're more musical than typical percussion hear and really accentuate the songs and offer nice contrast. Can you talk about how they came to be?

**Elliot Harvey:** I'm glad you were into it. We (Bill, Ben, and I) all knew that those songs needed percussion, and we had skeletons of ideas for beats for them, but Dan Angel really put the meat on the bones. I hadn't seen him in seven years, and it was a great reunion. He came over with a school bus full of scrap metal, gongs, weird trinkets, and antique drums, and over several nights of explosive collaboration, we made it happen.

**KYS:** In keeping with the album, a lot of the music on this record feels very theatrical and cinematic. You also make references to people in a few of your songs, "Jason" in "Medicine" and of course "Osiris" and "Elsie Norris". Do you envision these characters? Is the music a soundtrack for their stories?

**Elliot Harvey:** A lot of the characters in my songs are a hybrid of fictional and non-fictional. "Elsie" for example is a cross between a character I read about in a book and an old woman I used to live next to when I was growing up. In "Medicine" the "Jason" person I'm talking to is partly myself, my past. The more I play the songs, the more the characters evolve and solidify in my mind, with clear images and distinct personalities.

**KYS:** You had your record release show in Philadelphia's Magic Garden. Did you shape the songs you played specifically for that venue?

**Elliot Harvey:** It went the other way around. I chose the Magic Gardens as a venue because I felt like the space went well with the songs on that record. Then I chose the other performers specifically for that venue. The dance, puppet theater, film, and music, everything was very mystical and enchanting, like the Magic Gardens. That's one of my favorite places in Philly, and I feel honored that I got to host that event there.



**KYS:** What comes next for Elliott Harvey and a Stick and a Stone?

**Elliot Harvey:** As for a Stick and a Stone, this fall I'll be recording a collaborative split 10 inch with Signals, the psych-punk band that I toured with in June. I'm planning on touring again in February, probably in the Northwest. Edible Onion will be releasing Opal Nightly on vinyl and packaging it in lace. I'll be making a music video for "medicine" with puppeteer Geppetta. I'm also putting together a collection of songs that are more beat-driven to make into another album soon. And I'm applying for grants to be able to afford all this madness...!

As for Elliott Harvey, I'm learning about beekeeping, I'm organizing with a childcare collective to support racial justice organizations, and I'm finding ways to get better at connecting with my body. Preparing myself for the upcoming winter, trying to keep my head up, taking it one day at a time. What about you? What's next for you?

**KYS:** Well, I just got laid off from my job, so starting November 1st I am unemployed. I am hoping to move to New Mexico shortly after that and then travel around the west coast for awhile. Then I will figure out what comes next.

# Crime Scene Photos By Rachel Atcherson



Social networking is a strange thing. About a year ago I started to notice that I was being “tagged” in photographs taken at shows that I attended. On more than one occasion there would be an image of some dude or lady rocking the fuck out and in the background would be me, face hidden not so discretely behind my camera. Eventually I began to pay attention at shows and in my own view finder, on the other side of the room was a tenacious young woman snapping away and sometimes getting in the mix at hardcore and punk shows in Washington DC. For as long as I have been going to shows in the Dead City, I found this revolutionary. I also found Rachel Atcherson’s photos to be really great. Being a music photographer for almost twenty years now, I get a kick out of other people’s photos from the shows I go to. Rachel has a magical way of bringing the viewer into the show. She does not attempt to isolate the performer away from the audience and many of her photos include the spectators as well as rockers, further breaking

down the hero worship that can sometimes evolve in these situations. In Rachel’s photos, it is not just the performance, but the entire tribal experience of the show that is important. And I am very envious of that vision.

*In the event it isn’t obvious, all the photos accompanying this interview are by Rachel.*

**KYS:** Tell me about your first hardcore/punk show?

**Rachel:** I consider my first show to be day 2 of posi youth fest 4, because I saw more than one band. but my first show was actually strength through defiance at the grog and tankard when they still did punk shows. very interesting show. before that I had pretty stuck with pop radio hits and oldies (60's/70's stuff), so punk was definitely a new genre for me and wow did it just seem SO AWESOME. people screaming about shit that, I think, actually matters in the world. I appreciated it.



**KYS:** I've never been to PYF, though it seems like a really great space for young people to create and come into their own. I think the benefits from those shows has resonated well in DC. What have you seem grow from that experience? How did it shape your outlook on DC's punk and hardcore history?

**Rachel:** PYF has always been a really constructive festival that opens up people's eyes to many different viewpoints within dc punk and hardcore and I believe PYF lets people skill-share and discuss all of that, in a really positive way. If I learned anything from PYF all three years I've gone, it is to always be open, a closed mind doesn't solve anything. But anyway, I know when I came to my first PYF, the entire experience was so eye-opening. I went to an all-girls Catholic high school and going from that little chicken coop/prison to a punk concert with punk discussions, truly awesome. It shaped my outlook by giving me the foundation of punk history. Before PYF I hadn't even known this type of culture really existed. I know, pathetic.



**KYS:** Did photography and punk rock come hand in hand for you?

**Rachel:** In some ways, yeah. I definitely started going to shows before I bought my first DSLR, but only by a few months.



**KYS:** Was there any photographer, picture or image that inspired you to try your hand? What was the first show you decided to take photos at?

**Rachel:** There really wasn't any photographer or picture that inspired me, eek! My first show was at the Party Pit (Tenleytown) with Broken Bodies and I think Grab Your Socks? I remember I got a really cool picture of Lucas (pretty sure?) (Broken Bodies) jumping and I was so happy!

**KYS:** Is there another photographer's work you wish you could emulate, or is there another photographers photo you wish you took?

**Rachel:** I wish I could take some of Maddy Strassler's photos - I remember before I bought my camera I looked at her facebook photos all the time because she did manual photos and she could do the coolest things (double exposure/overlapping) with black and whites. She published a zine a while ago called *Spectrum* that was really rad with awesome photos.

**KYS:** One thing I notice about a lot of the pictures you take at shows is that you often include the audience, or publish pictures of only the audience. It captures, for me anyway, the shared experience, breaking down the wall between band and spectator.





**Rachel:** Yes, the crowd is a crucial part of my photography. Sometimes I can't help but smile SO big because I see the passion the crowd has for the music - god how awesome is a bunch of punks all yelling into the mic. Dedication is what that is.

**KYS:** You've had photos published in Razorcake, Maximum Rock and Roll, for the Coke Bust LP, and Rations also used a shot on their new demo tape I recently noticed. These venues for me, are like some of the best ways to view rock music photography.

Does this recognition of your work in these spaces push you to want to do it more, to take your photography and thus your subjects further?

**Rachel:** Having my work in various publications is so gratifying. It 100% makes me want to take more pictures. It's also a tiny bit of an ego-boost, as sometimes it's easy to doubt one's own photography skills. Another fantastic ego boost: whenever Chris Moore writes on my facebook wall: Good photos! And all this definitely makes me want to take more photos of those bands - my version of a thank you.

**KYS:** I noticed that you had a photo album for a conference on veganism. What led you towards a vegan diet? How important was punk and hardcore in making that decision?

**Rachel:** I do have a photo album from the Animal Rights 2010 Conference in DC. Amazing conference. What initially led me to a vegan diet was my AP Environmental Science class that I took my senior year. We started to learn about how much eating meat affects the world around us, and well, real environmentalists just don't eat meat - and since I consider myself an



environmentalist, I decided to stop. So I went vegetarian. But then, I decided to look at why we ate meat, and what goes on in factory farms, and from what I found out, I couldn't continue eating any animal by-products.

Punk and hardcore has reinforced veganism SO much. Coming from my all-girls Catholic high school where there was about 2 vegetarians and 1 vegan, it was SO tight to go to a punk vegan craft brunch and eat with so many other vegans (who all by now have become some of my closest friends).

**KYS:** Awesome! So, what does the future hold for Rachel Atcherson?

**Rachel:** Well right now I'm at BU - so for a while the future holds me missing dc hardcore/punx. And then hopefully it will hold me loving the Boston scene. Besides that, just the usual, uppin the punx.



## Ten Questions With: Comedian Blake Midgette

We ask many people the same questions. You get to read them.

*I've known Blake for a long time. He used to make me laugh and cry when we worked together. He is crude, gross and always looking to make people squirm. He is also deadly charming and brilliantly funny. Not for the faint of heart, or the heartless.*



1. Where are you?

I am now living in Austin Texas, drinking capital of the universe.

2. How is life?

After a brief struggle finding a job to pay the rent it's good.

3. What do you do?

I'm a server in a pretentious hipster bar who also happens to do stand up comedy.

4. How did you get started?

Comedy? I'm a drunk and I need constant attention.

5. What do you like?

Good food, booze and pussy.

6. What do you think should

happen?

World peace? Better ozone? I truly don't give a fuck.

7. What needs to stop?

Stupid causes and politically correct 21 year olds.

8. What are you reading?

I just read David Cross' book; it was snarky and fun. Currently rereading *Preacher* for the thirtieth time.

9. What are you listening to?

I currently own no music. I moved here with a suitcase, it sucks.

10. Where are you going?

The top?

# Reviews

*If you want me to review your stuff send it to me an email and I will let you know, cuz right now I don't have an address. I will send you a copy of the zine your review ends up in if you send me a return address. I also have a blog (korruprtyrself.wordpress.com) where I review stuff. Some of these reviews can be read there. You don't have to send shit though.*

## Music:

### Leatherface – The Stormy Petrel LP – No Idea Records

This record right here, right now made me decide I wanted to include reviews in this issue of the zine. Holy fucking shit this album is fucking good. Dude it's like Woodie Guthrie meets Thin Lizzy meets Discount or some shit like that. I don't know man, it's really catchy and easy to listen to. It just melts over me and makes me feel warm and fuzzy which is funny because it's also a really manly album. Franky Stubbs classic shredded vocals are beautiful. Shit fucking destroys your life. Get it now.

### Thank God – Ice/Age LP+CD – Exotic Fever Records

This album gives me nightmares while I am wide awake. The opening guitar riff is really spooky and the spazzy, grid/math rock delivery right from the get go just freaks me the fuck out. The singer of this band sounds really tortured and insane. Not just like punk rock singer tortured and insane, but like a guy that fights ghosts in the milk isle of the mini mart on the corner by your girlfriends house. This is some neurotic music made by dudes that probably smoked a lot of weed and played Nintendo a bunch when they were kids. The cover art for the LP is awesome and it comes with a CD. Buy this shit now and act like a Ninja on PCP. It's all you can do really.

### Night Birds – s/t 7" – Dirtnap/Grave Mistake

Holy Surf Rock Batman! Shut the fuck up Robin you skinny leg having mother fucker. Actually, I am reminded of when I was a kid, I had a Batman and Robin action figure set with a car. It was pretty cool, but I always thought there was something off with Robin. Night Birds debut, another Mikey Erg band which I why I picked this up. It's bratty and slappy. It kinda reminds me of early NOFX a bit, but it's doubtful this band will end up as terrible. There's some Dead Kennedy's in the guitar playing and a bit of Pansy Division on the vocal delivery. It doesn't disappoint, but man those green undies on Robin really bothered me.

### Bankrobber – Vultures 7" – Hydrogen Man Records

I bought this record in Philadelphia because I really liked the cover, a drawing of a screaming bird covered in blood. It's pretty appropriate for the six songs inside. Short, loud, heavy hardcore. There is some definite homage to early Metallica in there a bit. Didn't totally blow me away, but it's not bad either. No regrets with this purchase.

### Puerto Rico Flowers – 2 7" - Fan Death Records

The mysterious Puerto Rico Flowers, the pained drudge masterminded by John Sharkey III, have released a new two song single on the equally obstinate Fan Death Records. Simply titled 2, the public is offered a small tease. Look, the Joy Division calls were not that far off, but the keyboard part on the A Side "Voice of Love" are more wrought in 80's New Order. I'm not surprised nor am I displeased. The haunting drum and bass sound is perfected in a drenched bleakness on the flip side "When Your Lonely Heart Breaks". This shit will always

be on the fringes, even of indie rock, even if it's loved by the critics. This is something else, entirely it's own. It's damaging my brain. It's so good. By the time you read this, the 7" is already out of print. Fucking Fan Death.

### The Max Levine Ensemble - Them Steadily Depressing, Low Down Mind Messing, Post Modern Recession Blues 7" - Asian Man Records

The Max Levine Ensemble have been a band for ten years, but they are really hitting their stride now. Them Steadily Depressing, Low Down Mind Messing, Post Modern Recession Blues, their second 7" released with in a year shows this band just getting better and better. Opening song "The Lucky Ones" has been in the set list of their many shows in DC over the last few months, but this recording really kicks ass. They've never sounded this powerful, David Combs vocals not quite as crammed, Bepstein kicking out awesome complementary vocals. But what scares me is that it's a pretty angry record. The venom has been poking through at the shows, but age has added some cynicism to these fun loving chaps. Regardless, this makes their past recordings seem pedestrian. They are long over due for more recognition, definitely underrated. Pick this up, it will make your feet want to bounce and your hands want to do something good in the world.

### Give – Heaven is Waiting 7" – React Records

Give kind of fucks up my life. They are one of the first new bands that really capture some early to mid nineties rock and roll. Shit sounds like some serious Swiz shit. But they are so god damn good. *Heaven is Waiting* is a two song slice of their sonic grove. The goddamn guitars sound like Embrace riffs and their singer gruffs it out, but this shit totally just is infectious. The flip side "One" starts out with a rumbling bass that sounds like a fucked up car or something. This band is so fucking good. DC doesn't even know yet how good this band is. Sonic Bloom indeed.

### Devour – Insect Circuitry 7"- Headcount Records

Neurosis has a very familiar sound to it. Pretty much, if a band wants to sound fucked up and screwed up, it's not really hard for them to do that. Devour are not shy about putting on the mask of crazy and it works out well for them. It's difficult to pair this 7" down really. It's got the blast beats, hoarse vocals, buzz saw crunchy guitars and just enough rumbling thunder at the bottom of the sound spectrum. It makes me a little fucked up just listening to it. Like maybe there are creatures out to get me, and maybe they are little machines.

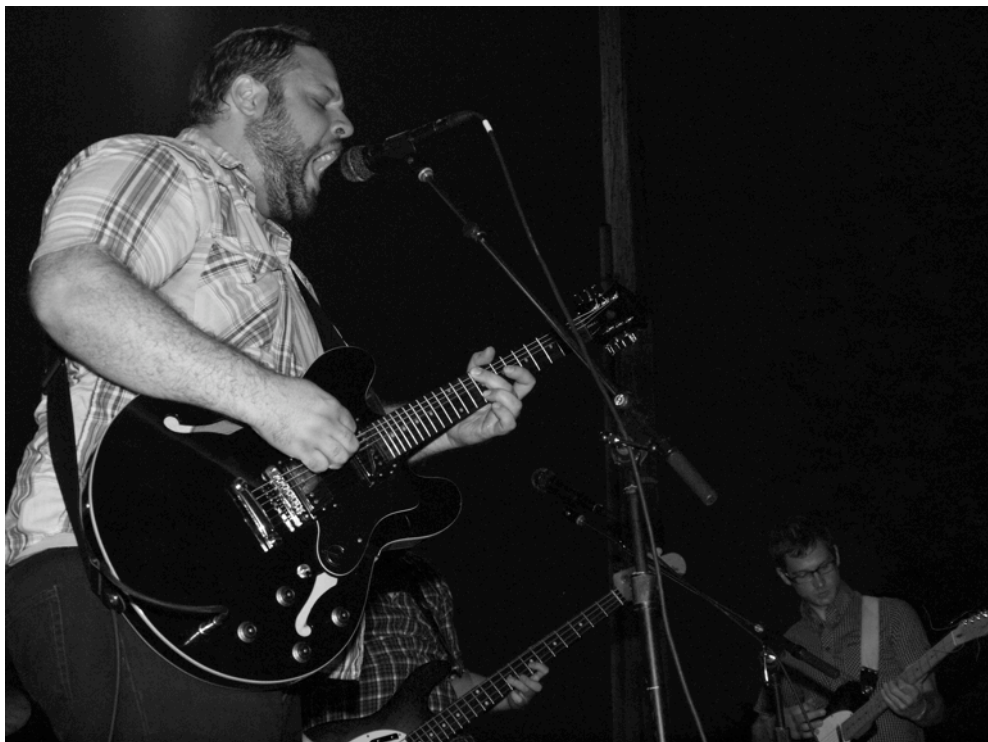
### The Gift - Demo 2010 - self released

I'd say it's fairly easy to get captured by and caught up in the mysticism of The Gift's Beck Levy. Her all too short days in Turboslut left a trail of converted wishing for more. The new DC trio has been making vibrations in the concrete of our capital streets and their first demo will probably leave you impotent. It's that good. Everything is loose and fierce. Biting lyrics, horrifying screeches, noisy interludes. This demo crushes lives. Get transfixed.



## Grabass Charlestons/Toys That Kill - Split 12" - No Idea Records

I am really tired and haven't been sleeping well. I drank coffee, but that shit just made me jittery and no more alert. And Toys That Kill covered "No Love Lost" by Joy Division on this split record and it's really messing with my head, because it sounds so true to the original I get confused. Bottom line, this record will mess with your mind. The cover is Neon Blue and Pink, the record comes in Pink or Blue (I got Blue) the Grabass side is really subdued and different then the other stuff by them I have, and the Toys side is really psychedelic. Not like Led Zeppelin, just like I haven't slept well and the guitars sound all West Coast poppy. It's pretty good. I wish I worked at No Idea Records. They put out lots of good stuff.



Print:

### ***Attack of the Zombie Soy Bot! #7 and #8***

**Tom Zombie Soybot** – [zombiesoybot@hotmail.com](mailto:zombiesoybot@hotmail.com)

Attack of the Zombie Soy Bot is an anecdotal, comic zine about the life and times of this dude Tom living it up in Pittsburgh. The art work, it's not the greatest, I am not going to lie. But you should not let that put you off because the zine itself is funny as shit. Tom writes some comics that span 6 to 8 panels and some that are just one panel. I really liked them. #8 was a bit short, but that's only cuz #7 was so good. You should email him and get copies of this stuff. It's pretty awesome.

### ***Make It Happen#3***

**Sasha** – [xrobotx@yahoo.com](mailto:xrobotx@yahoo.com)

Sasha is a straight edge, vegan kid in his thirties that I know from seeing shows. I've known him forever. I saw 1905 and he was there. I saw Del Cielo a couple times and he was there. I still see him at shows. It's awesome. His zine is also awesome. He tells tales of travel, love, the search for awesome vegan food, straight edge and how getting older sux. It's one of the best personal zines I have read in a really, really long time. You should get a copy. Like right now.

### ***Milkshake #4***

[yougottakeponwalking.blogspot.com](http://yougottakeponwalking.blogspot.com)

Milkshake is done by this Belgian lady who is into punk and hardcore and issue #4 is all about DC hardcore. I think everyone in this town has read this zine, which is awesome. I liked it. The interviews with the bands are all pretty standard, but she interviewed a lot of good bands. Alec Mackaye has a story in it and Carlos from Worn Thin tells a cool story too. There are some other bands interviewed. As well. By the time you read this, it will be out of print. But maybe if your nice, I'll photocopy it for you.

Korrupt Yr Self – Still No Return Address

**TO:**

Dear Mail Person,  
If you can't deliver this,  
just keep it and read it

